followed by the visit (Sept 13-16, 2003) of a group of Chief Executive Officers (CEOs) of Pakistani companies for the establishment of Indo-Pakistan CEO's Forum. A joint India-Pakistan trade website was also launched on the occasion. Participation of a large contingent of Pakistani businessmen in the India International Trade Fair (IITF), held at New Delhi in November 2003, was facilitated. In addition, Government has also approved an exhibition of "Made in Pakistan" products in India.

India's proposals for normalising relations with Pakistan

288. SHRI RAMA MUNI REDDY SIRIGIREDDY:
SHRI P. PRABHAKAR REDDY:
SHRIMATI SAVITA SHARDA:
DR. ABRAR AHMED:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that India proposed a dozen of steps to Pakistan to ease the tension between the two countries;

(b) if so, the details of the proposals sent by Government to Government of Pakistan;

(c) whether Government have received any response from the Government of Pakistan; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH): (a) and (b) In continuation of Prime MInister's initiative of April 18, and as a part of the step-by-step approach to normalise relations with Pakistan, India, on 22 October 2003, announced a series of steps to further promote people to people contacts between the two countries. The proposals included resumption of civil aviation links to be followed by resumption of the rail link; resumption of bilateral sporting encounters including

cricket; permission to senior citizen (above 65) to cross at Wagah on foot; holding of visa camps in different cities to benefit the people; increasing the capacity of the Delhi-Lahore-Delhi bus service by running more buses; the establishment of links between the Coast Guards authorities of the two countries; the non-arrest by either side of fishermen of the other country within a certain band on the sea; provision of free medical treatment to a second lot of 20 Pakistani children; resumption of passenger shipping services between Mumbai and Karachi; commencement of a bus service between Srinagar and Muzaffarbad, and a bus or rail link between Khokrapar and Munabao, and further increase in size of the respective missions after resumption of civil aviation and as technical level talks begin for resumption of the rail link.

(c) and (d) Pakistan's initial response on 29 October, 2003 was inadequate. While welcoming some of the proposals, like allowing senior citizens to cross Wagah on foot; establishing links between Indian Coast Guards and Pakistan Maritime Security Agency; and resumption of bilateral sporting contacts, Pakistan opted to politicize the humanitarian gestures and attached impractical, extraneous and delaying conditions to others.

However, on 23 November 2003, Pakistan Prime Minister Jamali responded positively to the Indian proposals of 22nd October, and agreed to a number of measures. He also announced that Pakistan armed forces along the Line of Control (LoC) have been issued instructions to ceasefire along the LoC with effect from Eid al-Fitr. Subsequently, the Director General Military Operations (DGMOs) of the two countries agreed to observe cease fire on the International Border, LoC and Actual Ground Position Line (AGPL) in Jammu and Kashmir with effect from the mid-night of November 25, 2003.

Anti-Indian activities in Bangladesh

289. SHRI P. PRABHAKAR REDDY: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFIRS be pleased to state: